



WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC NEWS

WESTERN COOPERATIVE ELECTRIC, INC.

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FROM THE MANAGER

Thank You For Attending Western's 79th Annual Meeting

First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each of you who attended Western's 79th Annual Meeting on May 8. Your participation enriched the event and reaffirmed the strength and vitality of our cooperative family, a testament to the power of our community. Together, we are indeed stronger, and your active engagement is the driving force behind our success.

A special acknowledgment goes out to our distinguished guest speaker, Lee Tafanelli, CEO of Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. His remarks echoed our meeting's theme of "Wired for Success." Tafanelli's wealth of experience and wisdom provides invaluable leadership to all the electric

cooperatives across the state of Kansas, and we extend our gratitude for his words and contributions.

For those unable to attend the meeting in person, we've made sure that you can still be part of the experience. Key moments from the event, including speeches and presentations, are available for viewing on our website, www.westerncoop.com. We believe in keeping all members informed and engaged in our cooperative's activities, regardless of their ability to attend in person.

I'd like to take this opportunity



Tom Ruth

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Western's 79th Annual Meeting was held on May 8 with 150 members, guests and cooperative staff present.

Celebrating BOARD MILESTONES

Thank You For Attending Western's 79th Annual Meeting *Continued from page 12A* ▶



Richard Schaus (left) accepts a token of appreciation from Board President Nick Zerr in recognition of his 50 years of service to the board of trustees.



Board President Nick Zerr (right) presents retiring Trustee Craig Crossland with a gift to honor his 20 years of service.



Trustee Dale Weinhold (left) accepts a certificate from Board President Nick Zerr to commemorate his 10 years of service.



Tim Stanton was elected to represent District 2 and will be the newest member of the Western Board of Trustees.

to recognize and express appreciation for our newly elected trustees: **MARVIN KELLER** representing District 1, **TIM STANTON** representing District 2, and **LANDON HEIER** representing District 3. Your willingness to serve in these crucial roles demonstrates your unwavering commitment to our cooperative's mission and values. Thank you for stepping up to help guide us toward continued success.



Kansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc. CEO Lee Tafanelli addresses the Western members.

During the meeting, three valued board members were honored for their dedication and commitment to our cooperative. **DALE WEINHOLD** was recognized for his decade of service, a testament to his unwavering dedication to our cooperative's success. Retiring from the board this year, **CRAIG CROSSLAND** was celebrated for an impressive two decades of service. Finally, **RICHARD SCHAUS** was honored for an astounding half-century of service, a milestone that speaks volumes about his unparalleled commitment and enduring passion for our cooperative's mission. Their combined years of service reflect a deep-rooted commitment to our cooperative's values and serve as an inspiration to us all.

As we reflect on the achievements of our annual meeting, let's carry forward the spirit of collaboration and unity that characterized our gathering. The Western employees have proven time and again that there's no obstacle we cannot overcome to accomplish our mission of serving our members. Your ongoing support, dedication and participation are the cornerstones of our cooperative's strength, and for that, we are profoundly grateful.

I'd also like to extend our gratitude to the Kansas Legislators who honored us with their presence and shared valuable insights into issues crucial to our community's welfare. Thank you to Sen. Rick Billinger, Rep. Barb Wasinger, Rep. Ken Rahjes, and Reid Petty, representing Sen. Jerry Moran, for taking the time to join us and contribute to our discussions.

In the months ahead, let's harness the momentum generated at our annual meeting as we work together to realize our shared vision for a thriving community. Your feedback, input and involvement will continue to be invaluable as we navigate the road ahead and pursue our collective goals.

Once again, thank you for your unwavering commitment to Western Co-op. With your support, dedication and active engagement, we will continue to thrive and succeed as a cooperative family united in our pursuit of excellence.

TOM RUTH, GENERAL MANAGER

Western Congratulates Youth Trip Winners

Western Cooperative Electric proudly announces the 2024 youth leadership trip winners: **MARIAH WERTH**, LaCrosse High School; **BRYAN GARVERT** and **TAYLOR AYERS**, both representing Plainville High School; and **EVAN WALT**, Hill City High School. These students have all demonstrated exceptional leadership potential.

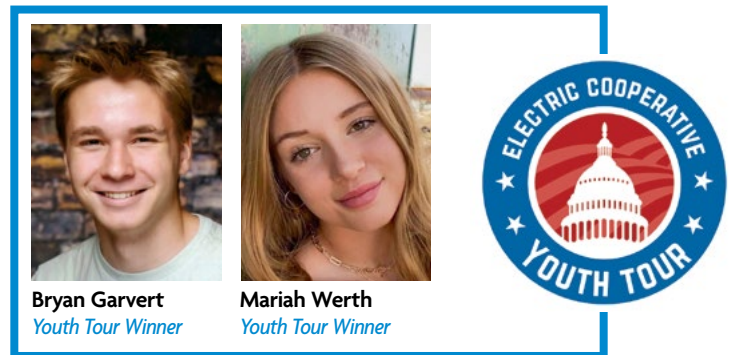
Western believes in developing the potential of today's youth to become tomorrow's leaders. To provide opportunities for building these skills, each year, Western invites juniors from its cooperative service area to apply for all-expenses-paid trips to the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C., and the Cooperative Youth Leadership Camp (CYLC) near Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

Werth and Garvert will attend Youth Tour June 13-21, and Ayers and Walt will attend CYLC July 12-18. A panel of judges selected the winners after evaluating the candidates' applications, résumés, essays and virtual interviews.

"The students selected for our youth programs are leaders, both inside and outside the classroom," said Nolan Numrich, Western's assistant general manager/member services manager. "We know these trips to Washington, D.C., and Colorado will provide valuable, lifelong experiences for these students and help equip them to become community leaders in the future."

Youth Tour attendees will meet with state and national legislators in the nation's capital and build connections with thousands of high school students from across the country. The educational experience includes tours of Smithsonian museums and visits to the White House and other historic sites and monuments.

CYLC participants will learn about the electric cooperative industry through hands-on sessions, raft on the Colorado River and tour a power plant. Nearly 100 students from electric cooperative communities in Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and



Bryan Garvert
Youth Tour Winner

Mariah Werth
Youth Tour Winner



Taylor Ayers
Camp Winner

Evan Walt
Camp Winner

Wyoming are expected to attend the leadership camp this summer.

The contest is held each winter for Western's area high school juniors. For more information about youth programs or Western Cooperative Electric's scholarship program, www.westerncoop.com/youth-tour.

We know these trips to Washington, D.C., and Colorado will provide valuable, life-long experiences for these students and help equip them to become community leaders in the future. **NOLAN NUMRICH, WESTERN'S ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER/ MEMBER SERVICES MANAGER**

Empower Your Community

APPLY BY **JULY 1** FOR THE

Sharing Success Community Grant

Partnering with CoBank, Western Cooperative Electric is excited to offer grants to local nonprofit organizations. Don't miss your chance to apply for the 2024 cycle, with **APPLICATIONS CLOSING ON JULY 1, 2024**. Our board of trustees will carefully review each submission and announce the winners following the July 18 board meeting. Grant recipients will be honored with presentations in August and September.

GRANT AMOUNTS AND AVAILABILITY

We are proud to allocate a total of \$20,000 for up to four grants. The minimum request accepted is \$2,000. However, please note that our CoBank Sharing Success program operates with limited funds available. While we strive to support every worthy cause, we cannot guarantee full funding for all applicants.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

We welcome applications from any 501(c)(3) charity, as well as select organizations such as schools and government entities that serve a public purpose. However, please be aware that politically affiliated, religiously exclusive, or discriminatory organizations are ineligible for funding. Priority will be given to organizations within Western Cooperative Electric's service territory, and we encourage projects that benefit the community at large.

To apply, visit WWW.WESTERNCOOP.COM/SHARING-SUCCESS-COMMUNITY-GRANT and submit your electronic application.

Join us in making a meaningful impact in our community. Apply today, and let's work together to fulfill public needs and enhance our shared future.

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